

REMARKS

I. Introduction

Pending claims 1-4, 7-14 and 17-28 have been examined. The Examiner acknowledges that claims 7 and 17-19 contain allowable subject matter. However, the Examiner rejects claims 1-4, 8-14 and 20-28. Specifically, claims 1-4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over newly applied Michelson, U.S. Patent No. 6,204,874 (hereinafter “Michelson”) in view of Nzei, U.S. Patent No. 4,932,644 (hereinafter “Nzei”); claims 8-14 and 22-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Michelson and Nzei in view of Egashira et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,135,905 (hereinafter “Egashira”); claims 20-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Michelson, Nzei and Egashira, as applied to claim 11, and further in view of Komori et al., U.S. Patent No. 3,919,972 (hereinafter “Komori”); claims 26-27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Michelson, Nzei and Egashira, as applied to claim 11, and further in view of Hirano et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,246,466 (hereinafter “Hirano”); and claim 28 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Nzei and Egashira, and further in view of newly applied Baek et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,754,218 (hereinafter “Baek”).

By way of overview, Applicant amends independent claims 1, 11 and 28, cancels claims 7 and 17 and rewrites claims 18 and 19 in independent form, thereby placing the application in condition for immediate allowance with claims 1-4, 8-14 and 18-28.

II. Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner objects to claims 7 and 17-19 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but acknowledges that claims 7 and 17-19 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims (Office Action: page 7). As noted below, the subject matter of claims 7 and 17 are incorporated into claims 1 and 11, respectively. Thereafter, claims 7 and 17 are canceled to avoid redundancy.

Furthermore, Applicant rewrites claims 18 and 19 in independent form, thus placing claims 18 and 19 in condition for immediate allowance.

III. Claim Rejections -- 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-4 and 8-10

Claims 1-4 stand rejected under § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Michelson in view of Nzei.

Applicant amends claim 1 to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 7 therein, thereby placing claim 1 in condition for immediate allowance. Consequently, claim 7 is canceled to avoid redundancy.

In view of the above, claims 2-4 and 8-10 are allowable, at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 1.

Claims 11-14 and 22-25

Claims 11-14 and 22-25 stand rejected under § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Michelson and Nzei in view of Egashira.

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Applicant amends claim 11 to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 17 therein, thereby placing claim 11 in condition for immediate allowance. Consequently, claim 17 is canceled to avoid redundancy.

In view of the above, claims 12-14 and 22-25 are allowable, at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 11.

Claims 20-21

Claims 20-21 stand rejected under § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Michelson, Nzei and Egashira, as applied to claim 11, and further in view of Komori.

In view of the aforementioned amendments to claim 11, wherein the allowable subject matter of claim 17 is incorporated therein, claims 20 and 21 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 11.

Claims 26-27

Claims 26-27 stand rejected under § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Michelson, Nzei and Egashira, as applied to claim 11, and further in view of Hirano.

In view of the aforementioned amendments to claim 11, wherein the allowable subject matter of claim 17 is incorporated therein, claims 26 and 27 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 11.

Claim 28

Claim 28 stands rejected under § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Nzei and Egashira, and further in view of Baek.

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Applicant amends claim 28 to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 19 therein, thereby placing claim 28 in condition for immediate allowance.

IV. Conclusion

In summary, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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23373
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Date: April 6, 2004